

# L E T T E R

FROM A

GENTLEMAN at *London,*

TO HIS

Friend at —, in S—shire, concerning Honorary  
Freemen.

S I R,



TAKE very kindly this fresh Proof you have given Me of your Friendship, in communicating to Me so freely your Apprehensions, that *The leading Men of your Town have a Design to bring in a great Number of Honorary Freemen upon you.* And since You desire my Sentiments upon this Affair, I shall give you them (without Ceremony or Apology) with all the Frankness imaginable.

I AM far from thinking that an *Honorary Freeman* is never to be made upon any Account. It has been ever usual, even in the most uncorrupted Times, when a *Gentleman* of considerable *Estate* or *Merit* comes to live in, or near any *City*, or *Town-Corporate*, for the *Body* to do *Him* (or rather *themselves*) the *Honour*, of making him a Compliment of his *Freedom*. This may be done with an *honest View*, to serve the *Trade* and *Interest* of the Place.

BUT the *wicked Practice* that has, of late Years, been grafted upon it, of giving away *Freedom*s to *dozens*, to *scores*, to *hundreds* at a time; and that to such Persons, as by the *Meanness* of their *Fortunes*, or the *Distance* of their *Dwellings*, are no ways likely or capable to promote the *Trade* or *Interest* of the *Corporation*, but rather by a *blind and ferious Zeal* to destroy the Peace of it: *This* is what can never be justified by *any Party*; though *all* in their Turns, have been too much guilty of it.

IT is so *unnatural* for any *Body* of Men, and so *contrary to the Oath* that they have all taken, to give away their *Rights* and *Privileges*, and to divest themselves of all *Power* and *Significancy*, by calling in a parcel of *Strangers* to *domineer* over them; that had We not in Fact often seen it done, We could hardly think it possible for any *reasonable Creatures* to be guilty of so much *Weakness* and *Wickedness*.

IT is what a *prudent* and *honest* Man would never attempt: It is generally the *last Refuge* of a *bad Cause*.

WHEN a furious *Party-Man* has for a long time insulted his fellow Citizens, and trampled upon their *Necks*, till his *Tyranny* is become *odious* and *insupportable*; it is no Wonder if *such an One* has recourse to *This* or any other *Stratagem* to keep Himself Still in the *Saddle*: But they must be *Beasts purely made for Burthen*, who when they have a fair Opportunity to shake off their *Yokes*, shall tamely lend their *Hand* to their *Oppressor*, to *rivet* it upon them for ever.

IT nearly concerns you then to shew your selves *Men*; to be always *watchful* and *vigorous* against every Attempt of this Nature; and more especially so at such a *critical Juncture* as *This*; when not only the Interest of your *particular Corporation*, but that of the *whole Nation* depends, in a great Measure, upon your Conduct.

FOR your *new Representative* has so justly forfeited the *Esteem* of his *Electors*; by servilely complying with, and promoting every *Scheme*, which threatened *Ruin* and *Destruction* to our *Trade* and *Liberties*; that he can never expect to be chose again by the *same Persons*. But if You tamely look on, and without any Opposition suffer a Number of his *Creatures* to be complimented with their *Freedom*; He may in time obtain a *Majority*, who may send Him up with an absolute Surrender of your *Liberties*, and an *humble Petition for a general EXCISE*.

BUT I hope better things from your known Zeal and Integrity.

London, June 28th,  
1733.

I am, &c.